A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE ENGLISH NATION.

Thursday, May 30. 1706.

'TIS in vain to enter into a Deſcription of the glorious things, that in all Human Probability, will now attend our Attempts abroad. No Man can foretell Events! and I do not love to talk *a la prognoſtic*, I am fill'd with Averſions to Enthuſiaſms, Prophecies, Dreams, and Fore-bodeings.— But when any body obſerves the great Eclipſe of the Sun, which is the darling Emblem of *France*; and that it was more particularly pointed at, and compleat in the Dominions of *France*, and *Spain*; and what great things have immediately follow'd, how can they help being a little ſpeculative upon this Head?

Who can but wonder, that the firſt Year that ever this great Sun, or great Monarch carrying the Sun in its full Strength for his Emblem or Standard, ſhould ſuffer ſo great an Eclipſe of his Glory, and ſo ſenſible a Decay in his Luſtre? the Sun of Heaven, the Glory and Likeneſs of its Maker, and which this Monarch had cloathed himſelf with, ſhould at the ſame time ſuffer a Total Eclipſe of its Brightneſs, juſt over or juſt reſpecting his Dominion only.

For my part, I ſhould think we were wanting to our Judgments, if we were blind to the Connexion and Concurrence of Circumſtances and Providences in the World. I allow the Eclipſes of the Sun are no Miracles, but the Conſequences of known and direct Cauſes; and perhaps could ſay enough to convince the World, I am not ignorant enough in Aſtronomy, to be impoſed upon in that Caſe.

But Wars, Battles, Revolutions of Nations, and the Riſe and Fall of Princes, how-

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ever attended with visible Causes, have all a Wheel within the Wheel, a secret moving Hand, that directs them, both as to Time and Circumstance; and *the Time of them* concurring to the Time of *the Eclipse of the Sun*, cannot but afford us matter of Contemplation; and no Man can say, one was not a fair Notice of the other, let the natural Causes for it be never so plain.

I cannot end this Remark without one other Note, and which is really to the Honour of the Duke of *Marlborough*, as much as all his Valour and Conduct; that he is the Man of his Time of all the Generals, and Men of the Sword, the forwardest to acknowledge the Agency of Providence in the greatest Events of the War; and in Spight of Atheistical Banters, is the Forwardest to give the Honour of Victory to the God of Battle: Let others boast their own Glory; I am sure, he that sees the superiour Providence of his Maker, guiding all things, acts more the Man of Glory, than the most illustrious Atheist in the World; and 'tis peculiarly pleasant to me, to be writing this Remark of his Grace, the very day that he is giving God Almighty the Praise by a publick Thanksgiving in the Army; but I shall do his Grace more Justice on this Account another way.

I know, some People expose themselves to the just Censure of this Paper, and of all Men that desire to write Truth and Reason; by their continued Bantering the supream Power in all the signal Discoveries of it in the World; and study for some immediate Cause in every Event, to which they would rather ascribe the moving of that Event, than debase themselves, so much as to acknowledge the invisible Agency of a supreme Being.

I acknowledge, I have a very mean Opinion of such Peoples Judgment, a less of their Honesty, and least of all of their Principles; but I cannot but make this Observation upon it, *viz.* that first or last, they pay Homage to the Sovereign Agency, they would contemn, either in some penetrating Providence, that signalizes it self beyond their Pretences, stupifies their pretended Reasoning, and bears a Testimony to it self, which they dare not resist; or in secret Recognitions of Conscience, which convince them of the Power of that being they contemn,

The secret Trepidation *racks the Soul,*
And while he says, no GOD, *replies,*
THOU FOOL!

The Observation is too sublime for this short part of a Remark; but I bring it as my Tribute to the Sovereign Influence over Human Affairs; and I am glad to see, first the Army, then the Government, joyning in the Heavenly Anthem of King *David*, *Non nobis Domine, non nobis, sed ad Nomen tuum*, &c.

I am no Preacher; and therefore when I touch these things, My Applications are very brief, — I applaud as much as any Man the Bravery of our Army, the Conduct of our Generals, and the Goodness of our Troops; But they that cannot see distinguishing Providence cutting out Victory, and preparing Causes that they may produce Events in the World, must be blind to their own Reason, ignorant of Circumstances and things, and able to give but a slender account, neither of the War, nor of any thing else.

God is always of the strongest side, *says the Atheistical Detractor from the Glory of his Maker*, when he hears of a Victory; and yet both the famous Victories of *Hochsted* and *Ramellies*, have been obtain'd by the weaker against the stronger.— The *Battle is not to the strong*, says the Text, a perfect Contradiction to the prophane Proverb before; who made the *Dutch* Horse fight? and the *Gens d' Arms* flye, those accustom'd to Disadvantages, these inur'd to constant Victories? who made *Le Regiment du Roy*, or the Guards of the *French* King, consisting of 1200 Men, beg Quarter of 300 *Scots* Dragoons? To say, the *Dutch* run away before to save their Horses, is to allow them before to be no Cowards; and yet a Man of Bravery can never turn his Back in a Fight to save a Horse; 'tis a weak as well as scandalous Conjecture.

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'Tis the wiſer and much fairer Conjecture, to own there is a mighty and inviſible Influence, that directs theſe things; that when his Work is ready, and Events are to be produc'd concurring with his Providences, qualifies and forms a Concurrence of Cauſes, which Conſequences obey of Courſe; he diſpirits the bold, and animates the fearful; and however Inſtruments may joyn, his Power operates by the Agency of Means, and all the Praiſe is due to the Wonders of his Providence.

MISCELLANEA.

I Cannot paſs over the various Remarks on the Succeſs of our Arms abroad, without opening one Door of immediate Advantage, which this Nation may reap from the preſent Revolution of Affairs in *Flanders*; and which I humbly recommend to our Merchants to apply themſelves to the procuring; and which if they think it not below them to conſult me in, I may perhaps be ſome way aſſiſtant in, more to their Advantage than they are aware of.

To come at the particulars of this, it will be abſolutely neceſſary to make an unhappy Recapitulation of one of thoſe many Steps, our wiſe Men have taken to ruin the *Engliſh* Trade, under the Weakneſs of their Efforts to ſupport it.

'Tis certain, Fools in one Sence are as fatal in a Government, as Knaves; and it is equally miſchievous and alike to me, whether I am ruin'd by the Ignorance or the Deſign of thoſe that attempt me.

In our late officious Times, when Men would be medling with what they did not underſtand; and like the Taylor, that ſtole the Ruſhes to keep his Hand in Uſe, would be doing ſomething, tho' it was Miſchief: Certain learned, legiſlating, Manufacture-ſpoiling, poor-employing Gentlemen, in the Abundance of their Underſtanding, as to Trade, moſt ſedulouſly applied themſelves to obtain a Prohibition of *Flanders* Lace; that our Country Maidens might not want Employment.

Had the Gentlemens Foreſight been equal to their good Meaning, they might perhaps have ſeen farther into the Inconveniencies attending this Matter; and not have look'd right forward only, what tho' Sir *F——s*, and ſome others might eye the ſecuring their Intereſts for Elections in the Lace-making Towns of great *M——m*. and others; had they been capable of the leaſt Regard to the general Scale of Trade; had they conſider'd what a conſiderable Trade we drove to *Flanders* with our woollen Manufacture, and how this Prohibition would incenſe the *Spaniſh* Government there, they would certainly have conſider'd better of it, before they had concluded to give ſo fatal a Stroke to their Countries Proſperity.

But like the Vote againſt the making the Soldiers Clothes in *Holland*, by which to employ a few *Engliſh* Taylors at home, you loſt clothing 80000 Men a year in the *Dutch* Service with *Engliſh* Cloth; and which immediately ſunk the *Yorkſhire* Kerſies 10 *s.* in 36 *s.* on the Value; ſo this Act fatally paſs'd, by which to employ a few Lace Makers at home, you prohibited the Importation of *Flanders* Lace; and the Flemings, as who could expect any other? immediately prohibit your woollen Manufactures upon pain of Death; and ſo at once you ſtab'd the Nation in the moſt ſenſible Part, the very Vitals of her Trade, *viz.* her Woollen Goods to above 250000 *l.* a Year.

Nor was this Prohibition of any great Service here, for our frequent Mournings, *which thoſe ſham-Patriots had better have took care to have regulated*, ſoon ſunk the Lace Trade to ſuch a low Ebb; that had they obſerv'd it, there was indeed no occaſion of a Prohibition, Lace univerſally going out of Wear for theſe 10 Years paſt

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at leaſt, and is not like to recover it ſelf to any Degree.

After this Abridgment of our excentrick Meaſures here in Trade, I come to my Point, which is to remind our Merchants, that now is the Juncture, when by the great Influence her Majeſty has over the Flemiſh Government, and while his Grace the Duke of *Marlborough* is upon the Spot, ſaving them from Deſtruction and *French* Bondage; this prejudicial Prohibition may be releaſs'd in *Flanders*, and our Trade for the Woollen Manufactures there be revived and reſtored.

Nor is there any doubt, but at the firſt Motion that way from the Government here, the Matter may be immediately adjuſted, any more than it is to be queſtion'd, that her Majeſty, whoſe Ears are always open to the juſt Requeſts, and the true Intereſt of her Subjects, will on the firſt Motion, for a thing ſo publickly beneficial to the Nation in general, be very forward to eſpouſe ſo great an Article of Trade, and obtain ſo conſiderable a Grievance to be redreſs'd.

The Author has ſome other Steps, needful for the retreiving of this Breach of our Trade, ready to offer to any Gentlemen, who being concern'd in this Trade, ſhall think it worth their while to move in this matter.

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